

for homeland defense. I think we need to do a lot better. We need to do a lot better with our northern border control. We need to get the public health infrastructure out there. God forbid there is a terrorist attack. We need to be prepared. First of all, we need to try to prevent it. If it happens, we need to be prepared. I am for strong defense.

I hope Senators will carefully scrutinize this budget. We have before us—between the dramatic increase in the Pentagon budget and all of these tax cuts with about 40 or 50 percent going to the top 1 percent of the population—I am now talking about tax cuts that have already passed. Now we have this estate tax. With this House proposal, they want to repeal the alternative minimum tax. I don't think they want to reach back to the mid-1980s. That is too embarrassing. Ronald Reagan was for it. The whole idea in 1986 was not to make these multinational corporations pay any taxes when all the other people in the country were.

You have \$13 billion in tax breaks for multinational corporations. You have Robin-Hood-in-reverse tax cuts with about 40 or 50 percent going to the top 1 percent of the population.

You have a \$855 billion reckless proposal to do away with the estate tax for the richest and wealthiest Americans in the country while at the same time cutting homeless vets programs; cuts in small business programs; cuts in childcare; cuts in empowerment zone; cuts in economic development programs for the Iron Range; cuts in counselor programs; not live up to your commitment and promise on special education, helping our kids, helping our school districts, and helping our children; don't live up to your commitment on the Pell grant program; cuts in job training during a recession and during hard economic times when people in northeast Minnesota, or in greater Minnesota, or in metro Minnesota, many of them are going back to school, or trying to go into a job training program for skills development. They have been spit out of the economy. They are looking for training so they can get back to work—cut those programs.

My party needs to find its voice. Majority Leader DASCHLE has been out there and he has been vilified. I smile. I think sometimes it is an effort to make him out to be a Newt Gingrich of the left. It is outrageous. But this party, my party, the Democratic Party, is supposed to be the party of the people. If there ever were a time for us to find our voice and for us to speak out and for our country to have a real debate about these values, it is now. In the words of Rabbi Hillel: If not now, when?

Personally, I think the thing I feel worse about is the children in relation to the education piece. I am going to be one of these people, in not too many years, who is going to be over 65 years old. Lord, we have six grandchildren. I just took our granddaughter Cari to

see "Fiddler on the Roof." There is that song: "Sunrise, Sunset." I don't know what has happened to the time.

I believe that ultimately the way we are judged is in relation to what we have done for our children, what we have done for our grandchildren. Have we made this country better and this world better for them? I think that is how we are judged. I think that is how we are judged as parents and I think that is how we are judged as adults. I think that is how we are judged as Senators. I think that is how we are judged as Representatives. I think that is how we are judged as a nation.

How have we done for our children? We are not doing very well. In this budget, we flat-lined affordable child care. I think only about 10 percent of low-income families are able to participate in affordable child care right now because that is all the funding there is.

We say we love the little children and are concerned about the development of the brain and that we want children to read better, but we have funded Early Head Start at about the 3- or 4-percent level.

We could be a real player for children prekindergarten. We could make a real difference. We could do so much more for our schools. We could live up to our commitment on special education. For title I—I am sorry, I have indignation—they make the claim we have added \$1 billion and that this is great. In real dollar terms, there is no additional money because there are more children who are eligible for title I.

We are going to test these children, all in the name of rigor. So you go to a Bancroft Elementary School and, big surprise, 80, 90 percent of them are on a free or reduced school lunch program; 60 percent of them are in homes where English is the second language; and 20, 25 percent of them move several times during the year for lack of affordable housing. There is a key education program, and there is no more funding for that. In fact, they are cutting funding for affordable housing, and we are surprised these children do not do as well? And we do not give them any more help to do better.

I think this is a debate about values. Everybody wants to talk about family values. This is a family value. How are we doing for our children? How are we doing for our grandchildren? Are we making life better for them? Are we going to make it possible for them to be good leaders in the future?

I think we have some seriously distorted priorities out there. I hope my party will directly challenge them.

A reporter said to me: The President is very popular. Does that make it hard for Democrats to be critical?

I said: Look, it is good for people to do well. The President is doing well in terms of the polls. Fine. But the real issue is whether or not we are willing to speak up for what we think is right, for what we believe in, for what we think is best for States and best for the country.

That is what people want us to do. It is important, as Democrats, that we find our voice.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, what is the pending business?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The pending business is the Kyl second-degree amendment.

VISIT TO THE SENATE BY THE PRESIDENT OF MACEDONIA

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, I wish to present the distinguished President of Macedonia, the Honorable Boris Trajkovski, who is a very fine gentleman with whom I have met and with whom the President has met.

RECESS

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate stand in recess for 6 minutes.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 4:45 p.m., recessed until 4:51 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. DAYTON).

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, the majority leader has asked me to announce to all Senators that there will be no more rollcall votes today.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to a period for morning business, with Senators allowed to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ECONOMIC STIMULUS

Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, I rise in support of the compromise economic stimulus package we are now considering.

The slowdown of our Nation's economy has been a matter of increasing concern following the terrorist attacks on September 11th. Millions of Americans are dealing with the economic repercussions of the attacks on our Nation. Hundreds of thousands of workers have lost their jobs, and consumer and business confidence has eroded during this time of uncertainty. The decrease in economic activity is affecting companies ranging from small businesses to corporations, not to mention entire industries such as the airlines and the travel and hospitality industry.

The slowdown in our Nation's economy is reflected in the State of Hawaii, where as of January 26, 2002, 56,313 people have filed unemployment claims since September 11th. This is almost double the amount of claims filed for the same time period as last year. In